

Calais Planning Commission
Official Public Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2014

Present Members:

Rich Quelch, John McCullough, Janice Ohlsson, Jack Russell, Gary Root and Betsy Parah.

Visitors:

J. Davin
Renee Carpenter
Scott Bassage
Jennifer Whitman
Pam DeAndrea
Grant Orenstein
Julie Hand
Drew Lamb
Randy Koch
B. Merryless
Ross Pelchuck

Jack's PowerPoint Presentation

- Town Plan Overview
 - o Purpose
 - o Why we need a Town Plan
 - o Why it is reviewed every 5 years
 - o Process for rewrite/review/acceptance
 - o Guidance from CVRPC
 - o What role it plays in Zoning Regulations
 - o How it ties into State Regulations
 - o Collection of information from various towns/Calais Residents
 - o Discussed the use of the Town Plan as a regulatory document
 - o Review the different sections
 - o Overview of Town Plan structure
 - Goals to action steps
- Discussed the concept of Smart Growth
- Showed the maps

Questions

- 1) What is the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and who elects the members of the board?

PC - Members of the CVRPC board are made up of representatives from each town.
<http://centralvtplanning.org/>

- 2) Why do people avoid having to go to the DRB?

PC - The PC members have received feedback from Calais residents that they would rather change their development criteria to fall within permitted use than to go before the DRB.

- 3) Comment - "We should ease people's perceptions of the DRB. They work hard at trying to help."

- 4) How would Smart Growth work for permitted use vs. conditional use?

PC - Add language to allow some conditional uses to fall within permitted uses. Add language to clearly define the criteria. Increase permitted uses. Add language for conserved land as an exchange for more dense development. Changes recorded in deed. Listen to people's visions and enable those to be permitted uses.

- 5) Comment to Section 7B page 17-18 in the Natural Resource section

He lives off the grid. Loves gravel and sand for the roads. He believes that it is a bad idea to create over-lay districts for locations that would be ideal for gravel extraction. It will conflict with existing VT laws. It would be difficult to locate where gravel could be extracted without disturbing any local residents. The key phrase is "undue adverse impact". He recommends that we eliminate goal 2. He recommends that we add language about limits. Limits could be the amount of gravel extracted, the size of the gravel pit, or the amount of gravel pits opened.

(There was much discussion.)

PC – We'll review this section.

- 6) Comment on Municipal Services section

The water district?

PC – East Calais

Extraction for commercial use? Says will... it may say "can" in the future.

PC – changing language to no extraction for direct resale.

Land Use/Shoreland District – add “surface” and “subsurface” water drainage

7) Comments on Flood Resilience – stream buffers

The streams need a 50’ buffer, which means no more mowing along the stream banks. Remove “grandfathering” so this doesn’t only affect new development.

Implies Calais might have an issue with FEMA if our riparian buffers were lacking and Calais had a massive flood.

PC- Who will enforce it? What will it cost? How will it impact resident’s town-wide? An Impact study needs to be done. Zoning Regulations has language about mowing in development, as well as not mowing for so many years. The state decides what the river corridors are. The PC prefers a persuasive approach, rather than a prohibitive approach to this.

Write a By Law?

(There was much discussion.)

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM

Notes recorded by Betsy Parah
Notes edited and typed by Rich Quelch